

ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA
342 MADISON AVENUE
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NEW YORK 17, N.Y.

WILLIAM BENTON
PUBLISHER & CHAIRMAN

Executive Registry
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February 14, 1956

Dear Allen:

The attached speech which I gave to the National Women's Democratic Club in Washington yesterday is a somewhat pallid version of what actually happened. I didn't follow the text too closely. But I repeated the idea which I advanced earlier at the Robert Patterson Memorial luncheon here in New York. I am attaching the release on the latter and I am marking some key paragraphs in my speech of yesterday.

How do we get these technical assistance academies under way? How do we get launched immediately a great program of federal scholarships, which is the fastest and quickest way we can bring the federal government power to bear in this urgently needed field?

I only have one difference with you. I see no evidence whatsoever that the terrifying advances which Communism has made in the field of scientific education--are turning up an "Achilles heel". I wish I could find such evidence. I argue with you gently in my Britannica Year Book article. I was pleased on Friday when my secretary reported that one of your representatives here in New York had come into my office and asked for ten more copies of this article.

I am attaching a letter to Marion Folsom. I am sure that it is wholly inadequate. Indeed I may be wholly wrong in it. Perhaps the best way to get this done is through the Defense or State Departments. But in my letter I am trying to stimulate Marion.

I am not giving out partisan statements on this subject, as you must have observed.

Very sincerely yours,

William Benton

DOCUMENT NO. 29

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CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS A G

NEW MOVE DATE: 2/14/56

Mr. Allen Dulles
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C.

WB/mh

February 16, 1956

The Honorable
Marion B. Folsom
Secretary of Health, Education
and Welfare
Washington, D. C.

Dear Marion:

Would you accept the CIA as a cousinly branch of the administration? I am attaching a memorandum from my secretary. And I am attaching the article to which this memorandum refers.

I haven't sent you any reading material in years. I would be very pleased if you could read this article, which will be published in the Britannica Year Book on March 6th, and I hope you will at least read the second section dealing with education and the closing section. Most of the article deals with education and I consider my observations on this subject the most important of any I brought back from Russia.

If you get a chance to read the article, then please ignore the enclosed mimeographed manuscript on the speech I gave Monday to the Woman's National Democratic Club in Washington, except for the few paragraphs which I have marked.

As an urgent matter of high national interest, how do we get a great scholarship program started immediately in the field of technical education--and how do we set up the technical academies which I have suggested? Shouldn't sponsorship of such a project come under the auspices of your department, rather than the Defense or State Departments? And shouldn't MIT, Cal Tech and other top technical institutions be employed to follow through?

You are in the front trenches of the new cold war with the Russians. If we do not enormously improve our educational system in the United States, I am inclined to think that we may be running a losing race. Our national problems of education cannot remain a matter of local concern. They are too vital to the future welfare of all of us.

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And it will be tragic if we appropriate large ~~sums~~ of money through the federal government in support of education, without a vigorous effort to set up suitable standards and to give the country, through its federal government, the leadership which it so desperately needs.

Very sincerely yours,

William Benton
Publisher

msdg

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Very sincerely yours,

William Benton

Mr. Allen Dulles
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C.

WB/mh

FROM: Kay Hart
Office of Wm. Benton
342 Madison Avenue
New York 17, N. Y.
OXford 7-1750

FOR RELEASE
at 1:00 PM Tuesday
Jan. 24, 1956.

NEW YORK, JAN. 24. . . Creation by the U. S. government of "Technical Assistance Academies," comparable with the U. S. Military, Naval and Air Force Academies but designed to produce foreign-aid specialists, was proposed today (Tuesday) by William Benton at the annual luncheon forum in memory of Robert P. Patterson at the Hotel Warwick. These should be supplemented, and this should be commenced at once, by a program of federal scholarship under the auspices of an appropriate interdepartmental government committee.

Benton, who served as Assistant Secretary of State in Washington at the same time Mr. Patterson was Secretary of War, 1945-47, suggested that one of the new institutions be named for Secretary Patterson.

Adolf A. Berle, also a former Assistant Secretary of State, joined Mr. Benton in a discussion of "After the Geneva Spirit, what?"

The phrase, "Geneva spirit," whatever its origin, has become a major slogan of communist propaganda throughout the world, Benton said. It signalizes a change in Red tactics, but not in Red objectives, said Benton, reporting on his recent month-long trip behind the Iron Curtain.

The new tactics call for stepped-up emphasis on economic and technical competition with the West.

"The Soviets are today turning out 50% more engineers, and more experts in certain technical specialties, than is the U. S., though our industrial plant is still more than twice the size of theirs," Benton said.

"Manifestly, they mean to export thousands of specialists to under-developed areas - competent specialists thoroughly indoctrinated with communism.

....more....

Office of Wm. Benton - 2 -

Tues. Jan. 24 release

"At the same time the United States, according to my information, is finding it increasingly difficult to get qualified people to go abroad on technical aid missions. Khrushchev claims communism will win the world - the uncommitted billion of the world's population who represent the balance of power - without a war. It is absolutely clear that the USSR intends to try. That doesn't mean we Americans can relax our military posture. But it does mean our Point 4 objectives may be outmatched."

Benton, who concentrated while in the Soviet Union on the educational system, reported that the Russians today have 4,300,000 enrolled in educational institutions above the secondary-school level, compared with 2,700,000 in the U. S. "We Americans have known for years that they have given up butter for guns and for heavy industry, but few have realized they have also given it up for education. Their goal is to train every Soviet citizen up to his full capacity - for the service of the state. By a combination of pressure and inducements - scholarships, well-paid jobs, prestige and draft exemption - the Soviets avoid the situation we are in, where half of the top 20% of our high school graduates don't go on to college."

Of the 4,300,000 Russians now in higher institutions, 2,500,000 are in tekhnikums, which Benton described as a kind of "vocational junior college." The remainder are in 33 universities and 800-odd "institutes." Over half are graduated in the sciences and advanced mathematics. They attend classes six days a week and ten months a year. When they graduate, the government assigns them to jobs which they must work at for at least three years, under penalty of prosecution - and these jobs can just as well be abroad as in the Soviet Union.

"Here in the U. S. we are losing something between 200,000 and 250,000 young people every year, who have the ability to complete a college education but who, for one reason or another, fail to do so. I do not propose that

we copy Soviet methods and we shall never do so. But in our own interest, and I also like to hope this can prove in the interest of the American ideal of maximum opportunity for all, we must learn how to cope with this new situation."

Benton proposed that the projected technical academies or institutes be established by the government, but preferably in conjunction with the existing high-level institutions, such as Massachusetts Institute of Technology and California Institute of Technology; that the entire student body be fully supported while in school, and be given a special status under the draft; that their teaching be not only in engineering, but in the recognition of human resources, including the use of educational techniques; that the academies contain high emphasis on the liberal arts and their graduates be given reserve commissions; and that, just as in the armed services, those who enter the program agree in advance to serve abroad for a limited term of years.

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ADDRESS BY WILLIAM BENTON, PUBLISHER ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA, FORMER U.S. SENATOR FROM CONNECTICUT, BEFORE THE WOMAN'S NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CLUB, WASHINGTON, D.C., FEBRUARY 13, 1956.

Fellow Democrats: A few weeks ago, in my role as a Trustee of the University of Chicago, I was pleased and somewhat startled to learn that the University is about to receive a bequest of between \$16 million and \$18 million for advanced training and research in the physical and biological sciences. The bequest comes from Louis Block an industrialist of Joliet, Illinois, who was virtually unknown to the University administration until a few months before his death late last year.

The more I have learned about this bequest the more fascinated I have become by Mr. Block and his views. Mr. Block feared that the United States may be losing the leadership in the race for scientific manpower to the Soviet Union. But he had faith that free science, and free learning, would prevail in the end. Here is a paragraph from Mr. Block's will:

"Productive basic research and advanced study require persons with independent minds who are capable of contemplating and exploring uncharted areas. Such persons may or may not conform to the accepted pattern of economic and political thinking. Therefore the maximum intellectual freedom must be encouraged if basic research and advanced study are to make the contribution to the welfare of mankind of which they are capable."

Mr. Block's bequest, imaginative and munificent though it is -- bigger than the total endowment of many an independent college -- is but a symbol, measured against the dimensions of the problem he saw, the race between communism and freedom for the intellectual and scientific mastery of the world.

What I saw in the Soviet Union in October and November does

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not suggest that we of the west are winning this contest. My purpose today is to report briefly on some of my observations. I discovered that Soviet achievements in the training of her young people are indeed remarkable, and that Soviet training goals are far in advance of our own. Russia's classrooms, libraries, laboratories and teaching methods may threaten us more than her hydrogen bombs, or her rockets to deliver them.

While Secretary Dulles concentrates on political and military crises, on expeditions to the brink of war which may prove in the end to have been diversionary, the Soviet Union has a longer range plan. It has a fixed plan for ideological and economic conquest. Am I unfair to Mr. Dulles when I suggest that he seems to have developed no adequate counter-measures?

For example the Soviet Union is schooling for export tens of thousands of capable engineers, scientists, schoolmasters and technicians. These specialists are being trained to help develop the economic resources of many countries outside the present Soviet orbit.

They will be used to win the confidence of the uncommitted billion men and women in Asia, Africa and the Middle East, they who hold the world balance of power. The U.S.S.R. seeks economic and political control over them. The Soviet leaders are preparing programs of infiltration which will be staffed with enough experts to exceed greatly the combined efforts of our present U. S. International Cooperation Administration, the British Commonwealth Colombo Plan and the United Nations Technical Assistance Administration.

The Soviet leaders have no intention of trying to match,

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over the next ten years, the 50 billions we spent on foreign aid in the past ten years. They will develop a few "economic spectaculars" which have dramatic propaganda value, and political value. The Indian steel mill is an example. This, I am told, is to be wholly financed by Russia. It will have a productive capacity of a million tons annually -- equal to one-quarter of the steel production of Italy or of Poland. In Egypt, the Russians offered to pay one-third of the cost of the High Dam at Aswan. This dam is expected to generate ten billion kilowatt hours of hydro-electric power per year. It will step up Egypt's electric power 10 or 12-fold. It will add 30% to the arable land. It will multiply the production of cotton, which the Soviet bloc is prepared to absorb.

Coupled with such "economic spectaculars" is the major new Soviet threat in the field of foreign policy, the export of battalions and regiments and divisions of engineers and technologists, first to service their projects, and then in a Sovietized version of our Point Four.

Thus the Soviets are now challenging us frontally at what have historically been two of our strongest points, -- technology and mass education. The present rate of Russian educational advance is faster than our own, just as their growth-rate in industrial production surpasses ours. The gap in total performance is closing. It is closing rapidly.

In less than thirty years the Soviets have created a primary school system rivalling our own in universality, with nearly 100% enrollment. Their secondary school system is mushrooming amazingly;

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by 1960 every Russian youngster is to be given an education at least comparable to a better high school diploma; our figure stands today at 80% enrolled. They have already surpassed us in both the number and percentage of students enrolled in institutions above the secondary level -- with 4,300,000 to our 2,700,000.

These Soviet attendance figures were given me by Red officials in Moscow and Kiev. Thus they may be suspect. They naturally want the underdeveloped nations of the world -- anxious, like the Russians to pull themselves up by the bootstraps -- to pattern themselves on the Soviet model. The officials may exaggerate. But maybe they don't. I suggest we would be wise to take the figures at face value. Americans have for years scoffed at Soviet claims - only to find that the Soviets have indeed outstripped all nations but ourselves in industrial production, only to find that they do indeed have the hydrogen bomb, and jet planes, and radar, and guided missiles, only to discover that Stalin's "visions" have become industrial realities, with the achievement actually surpassing the seemingly fantastic predictions.

Here in the field of education is one area where we have nothing to lose if we accept the Russian claims. If we are now stimulated to do a better educational job ourselves, then we shall only be doing what our own best tradition calls for. But if we are complacent, and fall behind, we may find ourselves outwitted, out-maneuvered, out-thought and outbuilt throughout the world.

There is more to the story of Russian educational advances than attendance statistics. Russian youngsters go to school six

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days a week and ten months a year. Discipline is strict. At all levels, Soviet students work much harder than our students do. There are few "student activities" as we know them and almost no elective subjects.

In the last years of secondary school Soviet students must take four years of mathematics, including algebra, geometry and trigonometry. Four or five years study of physics is required of all before completion of the tenth grade. Four years of chemistry is compulsory, as are six years of a foreign language.

This contrast with our American standards is startling. Lewis Strauss, Chairman of the U. S. Atomic Energy Commission, recently told the Thomas Alva Edison Foundation: "In Russian high schools, of the study courses which every student must take, 40 per cent are in science and mathematics. I can learn of no public high school in our country where a student obtains so thorough a preparation in science and mathematics, even if he seeks it -- even if he should be a potential Einstein, Edison, Fermi or Bell." Indeed, 53% of our high schools don't even offer physics; and only one student in 22 takes it at all.

Above the secondary school there are more than 2,000 "tekhnikums" in the U.S.S.R., according to the estimate given me by Pro-Rector Vovchenko of the University of Moscow. These boast an enrollment of two and a half million students. Tekhnikums are a kind of vocational junior college, giving two or 2-1/2 year courses to produce what the Russians call "middle trained" specialists. Then there are 760 institutions of higher Soviet education, uni-

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versities and institutes giving five year programs, with an estimated enrollment of 1,825,000 students. Total Soviet post-high school enrollment is about 70 per cent higher than ours.

The University of Moscow, with its gleaming new 33-story central tower, dominating the city, enrolls 23,000 students. At the lowest estimated unofficial exchange rate, twenty rubles to the dollar, the recent capital investment of three billion rubles for the new scientific building of the University is astonishing. The equivalent of at least 150 million dollars, this is more than has been spent for the total physical plant of all but a very few of American universities. This great new building symbolizes to all Russia what lies ahead in the fulfillment of Soviet ambitions for their youth. The teaching faculty of the University numbers 2,000, all of whom must do research. Another 500 faculty members do not teach, devoting themselves exclusively to research.

Eighty to ninety per cent of all students at the universities, institutes and tekhnikums are on state scholarships. The number and size of scholarships are determined by the fields the Soviet government deems most urgent. Stipends increase slightly each year the student passes his examinations. These scholarships largely remove from Soviet education the factor of the economic status of parents, which all too often is decisive in the United States. A student can keep going upward in the Communist world at the state's expense so long as he can make the grades. Weighed against our practices, these policies give the Kremlin obvious advantages for controlling and exploiting the development of its manpower potential.

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When a Soviet student is accepted for graduate work, his future is virtually assured. The average professor in the U.S.S.R. earns perhaps ten times what an ordinary Russian worker gets. Outstanding professors earn the equivalent of the annual income of a president of one of our important industrial corporations, supplementing their salaries with outside consulting jobs and royalties from textbooks.

This was John D. Rockefeller's idea back in 1891 and we have forgotten it. He sent Dr. William Rainey Harper from Yale to found his new University of Chicago. Dr. Harper reported back to him, "Mr. Rockefeller, I cannot persuade the top scholars of the East and of Europe to move to Chicago." Mr. Rockefeller asked, "What is the top salary in the world paid to a University professor?" The answer: "\$3,500.00." Mr. Rockefeller issued the order that in a decade developed one of the greatest universities of the world, "Pay your top men \$7,000.00." This was the salary in 1891 of the President of the First National Bank of Chicago. Perhaps this order explains why, as Arthur Page once said to me, the University of Chicago advanced the cultural and educational development of the West by a full generation.

The most talented young people in Russia are being lured into scientific research and engineering because of the privileged social and economic status given scientists and engineers. They skip military service. They swell the new plutocracy. They are the persons most sheltered from the grimmer realities of Soviet life.

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One sees youngsters in their mid-teens and young Russian married couples in the bookstores, browsing at the sections featuring scientific works; they buy books on nuclear physics in preference to novels or handbooks on interior decoration, in order to get ahead. In the huge Lenin Library in Leningrad, whose director claims 12 million volumes, every desk and chair in the great reading rooms adjacent to the scientific stacks was occupied; the silence was absolute; the concentrated zeal of hundreds upon hundreds of earnest-looking students was to me a bit breathtaking. I said to my librarian-guide, "Are these students from the University?" "Oh, no," he replied, "the University has its own library; these are workers from the night shifts of the factories, and by night our reading rooms are crowded with those from the day shifts. We operate day and night. This is how the workers prepare for examinations for advance training in the universities and the institutes."

There are no girls with dowries in Russia; few marriages with the boss's daughter; no Henry Ford III's. The way to get ahead is to study, and to master your physics and your calculus and your English, the new dominant language of science and the most widely studied foreign language in Russia. When Mrs. Benton visited the metro, she was picked up by a good-looking young man who offered to assist her chauffeur as a guide. His English was excellent. When he left, he asked her to comment on his accent. She reassured him. He said it was important, that he was an English teacher. She was emphatic. He walked away, then returned.

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He said, "You know, you are the first foreigner I've ever spoken to in my life."

There are grave weaknesses in the Soviet educational system. There is of course no academic freedom, and no permanent tenure for professors. Above the level of the ten-year school, every student's program is narrowly specialized: he devotes his full time to his specialty, except for the 10% of his time which every student must devote to study of Marxism-Leninism. Heavy emphasis is given to rote memorization of texts. The student can't change his mind about his profession in midstream; he can't shift. Every graduate must work for three years on an assigned job in his specialty, under penalty of prosecution. This is a system of training, rather than education -- training for the service of the state, and not for the happiness or fulfillment of the individual.

Soviet policies are directed to ends totally opposite from the concept of the common welfare as Pope Pius XI described it 26 years ago: "that peace and security in which families and individual citizens have the free exercise of their rights, and at the same time enjoy the greatest spiritual and temporal prosperity possible in this life, by the mutual union and coordination of the work of all."

But I fear the Communists may have found a formula for combining on the one hand high quality in scientific and technological training and research, including production of original and creative work, and on the other unquestioning acceptance and obedience in political, economic and moral matters. Whether this will prove to

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be true may turn out to be the crucial question of our historical epoch.

Recently Mr. Khrushchev said: "We don't have to fight. Let us have peaceful competition and we will show you where the truth lies." On another occasion he said, "We shall see who has more engineers, the Soviet Union or the United States."

We are entering into a struggle of a new type. We must wage peace ever more energetically with the new weapons. This is a struggle for which the Western world is little prepared. I shall even go so far as to suggest, to this most impartial audience, that the Republicans are even less prepared for it. They are fighting the new cold war with the blunted weapons of the old one.

We became a nation with the help of foreign aid, from the French. We Democrats originated latter-day foreign aid, first in war time under the leadership of Roosevelt and Lend-Lease. We moved ahead to the great peacetime advances under President Truman -- with the Marshall Plan and his bold new Point Four program.

What is needed now is not just more money for the military and diplomatic bargaining tables -- though we may indeed need more money exactly there. But over and above this we must seek a whole new concept, a whole new thinking-through, and I am prepared to suggest today that it must begin with our own educational system.

To start with one example: our present economy requires a minimum of 45,000 to 50,000 new trained engineers every year. We are now getting half the new engineers we need. The N. Y. Times is featuring front page stories on the excesses of the competitive

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efforts of our industries to lure, seduce, bribe and buy the engineers for which they thirst. Russia produced 53,000 new engineers last year. We produced 23,000, and why should any of these 23,000 serve overseas? Why indeed? The jobs in Fargo or Topeka are far better than those in Rangoon. Now remember

that when Bulganin and Khrushchev left Burma they made a gift, from the Russian people to the Burmese people, of a technological institute in Rangoon -- to be staffed, of course, by Russian experts.

Here's another example: At the rate we are going, this country is expected to have shortages of at least 22,000 doctors and 100,000 nurses by 1960.

Here's another: Professor Fletcher Watson of Harvard estimates that by 1966 our deficit of teachers may well exceed half a million. Right now, recruiting agents from California are said to be scouring the mid-west and south so that blessed California, at least, won't feel the shortage.

I am talking of course only about the trained people we shall need just to maintain the services required within the continental United States. Yet our security demands new emphasis on trained manpower for the underdeveloped and newly-free nations of the earth.

America has always drawn renewed strength from handling her problems as challenges, her unmet needs as opportunities. Perhaps the most tragic waste in the U.S. today is the number of talented students who drop out of the educational system for one

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reason or another. Between two-thirds and three-fourths of our best high school students do not finish college. Only two per cent of those who are capable of earning doctorate degrees do so. A recent College Entrance Examination Board survey, financed by the National Science Foundation, showed that "between 60,000 and 100,000 high ability high school boys and girls in 1955 would like to have gone to college but were prevented by financial reasons from doing so. There is still another group of 100,000 able high school seniors who appear to be uninterested in a higher education."

How can we summon up the conviction needed to meet educational needs so vast and complex? These are needs which should demand answers even if there were no Soviet Union shrewdly tooling up to fill the vacuum created by the legitimate desires and aspirations of the "uncommitted" people in the world today.

I made a modest proposal three weeks ago. From the telephone calls, conversations, and correspondence which followed its mere mention at a luncheon held in memory of the late Secretary of War Robert Patterson, this proposal evidently has some merit and interest. I suggested that our government create Technical Assistance Academies, equal in status to the United States Military, Naval and Air Force Academies-to educate picked young men and women in the requirements, experience and opportunities for service overseas as technical specialists. Someone called my suggested Academies "West Points of Point Four." I emphasized, in my proposal, that such Academies -- and I apply this to all technical or scientific education in our country -- should have a curriculum

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with a liberal infusion of the liberal arts, so that our young engineers and scientists, as they serve their apprenticeship overseas, will be well grounded in the principles of freedom and justice for which our democracy stands.

I advanced this idea as an example of the kind of thinking that is urgently needed. There must and will be many other proposal to meet the fundamental problem I have partially outlined. We should at once inaugurate a system of national merit scholarships. The exciting experience of the GI Bill of Rights is still fresh in our minds. Further, we should at once seek forms of inducement which will make teaching a more attractive career. And, as we seek ways to give federal help to education, we must courageously give leadership through standards set by the federal government, without undue invasion of our cherished control by local communities

The White House Conference on Education held this past autumn was seemingly a success -- at least politically. There is even talk about arranging another conference this year. But I have not discovered precisely what specific program the conference recommended. You here in Washington know -- at least, if there are any Republicans here, they know -- that conferences sometimes are held for the purpose of postponing decision and action.

If we cannot get faster action through the leadership of the Administration, through the State or Defense Departments, or the new Department of Education and Welfare, the time has surely come for the creation of a Presidential Commission to review our acute problems in the field of education, with emphasis on how

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these affect the national security.

If we win the cold war, if we emerge successfully from the era of competitive co-existence, which may last the balance of this century, it will be because we have learned to develop to the full our spiritual and intellectual resources as well as our material resources. Specialized robots are no match for human beings, if the human beings are at their best. If we offer to our young people the chance for their full development, we need not then fear "the Bear that walks with a slide rule," casting his shadow across America's and the world's future. And it may even be that if Communism thus inspires or stimulates or forces us to rise to our own best efforts as free men -- as Professor Toynbee suggests -- Communism will, after all, and in the long view of history, have done some good in the world.

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MEMO from Kay Hart

At Mr. Benton's request we've previously sent you a mimeographed copy of his forthcoming article for the 1956 Britannica Book of the Year. I am now happy to attach the "preprint" of the article. This will be published on March. 5

MEMO from Kay Hart

Perhaps you will recall that Senator and Mrs. Benton and their son John visited Russia, Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia last fall. The purpose of the trip was to prepare the feature article for the 1956 Britannica Book of the Year. Attached is a "preprint" of the article - scheduled for publication on March 5.